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CA FOR CA/OCS/ACS FOR WILLIAM HURST

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/01/2018

TAGS: [VE](#) [CVIS](#) [ASEC](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [FAIR](#)

SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN AIRLINES ADMIT THEIR OWN CONCERN WITH  
AIRPORT SECURITY

REF: CARACAS 1364

Classified By: Economic Counselor Darnall Steuart for reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d).

11. (C) On October 28, Emboffs met with 13 members of the Venezuelan Air Transport Chamber (CEVETA), one of whom raised serious concerns with Venezuelan airport security and spoke out in favor of immediate TSA security assessments. The association, which represents Venezuelan passenger and cargo carriers, emphasized its reliance on the U.S. and outlined a series of steps it will take to step up the association's advocacy for Venezuelan cooperation with both TSA and FAA. CEVETA also reported that Venezuela's Civil Aviation Authority (INAC) claims it wanted a TSA visit, but was ordered to reject the USG's September 16 request for consultations to discuss the visit (ref A). The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (BRV) reportedly believes it was in the right to refuse consultations because the 1957 U.S.-Venezuela bilateral aviation treaty does not reference security assessments.

12. (C) In a previous meeting on Oct. 24, CEVETA Executive Director William Bracho escorted executives from the two FAA-certified maintenance facilities which will lose their certification on October 31. (FAA certified the only other facility in Venezuela through April 2009.) Econ Counselor informed them that the FAA was willing to travel to Venezuela to perform the inspections but did not have visas. She encouraged Bracho to ask INAC to support the FAA inspectors request for visas. During the October 28 meeting Bracho reported that he spoke to INAC President Jose Martinez Bravo who stated he would "take care" of the visas for two FAA inspectors this week. The night of October 30 a maintenance facility executive informed Econoffs that Martinez told him the visa problem would not be easy to resolve because INAC has the same problem with U.S. issuance of visas for Venezuelan inspectors traveling to certify U.S. service centers with Venezuelan certification. Martinez also said that some Venezuelan pilots have been waiting more than six months for U.S. visas. (Note: The Embassy consular section reports that there have been no recent visa applications for Venezuelan inspectors. Due to the Visa Mantis process, military pilots going to civilian flight training in the U.S. may wait 8-10 weeks for visas to be approved. End Note.)

13. (C) The Venezuelan air carrier representatives emphasized that 35 of the roughly 200 U.S.-registered planes in Venezuela are government operated and would also be affected by the de-certification of the facilities. Various members emphasized their support of FAA and TSA, noting that

Venezuela relies on the U.S. for 90 percent of its aircraft and 95 percent of its parts and services. Venezuela continues to be an excellent market for U.S.-built general aviation aircraft; Seniat, the Venezuelan tax authority, has recently purchased three Beechcraft aircraft. Several members added that they see their businesses as victims of the BRV's refusal to work with the USG on any level.

14. (C) The CEVETA members pledged to approach the Venezuelan Vice President and advocate for issuance of the visas for FAA inspectors as well as TSA visits. Bracho added that he would raise these issues discretely in an October 29 meeting with the Venezuelan National Assembly. He would also approach his International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) contacts to ask them to act as mediators calling for technical cooperation between the two countries. Bracho underlined his belief that Venezuela is also going to be faced with pressure on aviation security issues by the Europeans who may also request security assessments at Venezuelan airports.  
CAULFIELD